

Governor's Upper Yellowstone River Task Force
Meeting Summary
June 26, 2001
Yellowstone Inn
Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

I. Introduction

Members Present:

John Bailey, Chair	Jerry O'Hair
Roy Aserlind	Bob Wiltshire
Michelle Goodwine	Ellen Woodbury
Dave Haug	Jim Woodhull

Others Present:

Allan Steinle, Ex-Officio	Pete Story	Scott Bosse
Terri Marceron, Ex-Officio	Tom Hallin	Dennis Glick
Joel Tohtz, Ex-Officio	Jim Robinson	Karl Biastoch
Scott Compton, DNRC Ex-Officio Proxy	Duncan Patten	Jeanne-Marie Souvigny
Dean Yashan, Ex-Officio	Josh Zaffo	Joe DeFelice
Liz Galli-Noble, Coordinator	Bill Moser	
Amy Miller, Administrative Secretary	Stan Todd	

John Bailey asked Joe DeFelice to introduce himself and explain his video project to the audience. Joe was filming the Task Force meeting as part of his educational video project on the Yellowstone River. He works with High Plains Films in Missoula and is producing an educational video for Montana school kids, which is scheduled for release in February 2002.

II. Prior Meeting Minutes

The April 26, 2001 minutes were approved as written.

III. Financial Updates

1. Grant Spending Report:

Amy Miller reported the following to the Task Force:

<i>EXPENDED GRANTS</i>			
Grant Name	Completed	Amount	Study Component
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant	6-30-99	2,100.00	Physical Features Inventory
DNRC HB223 Grant	7-30-99	10,000.00	Aerial Photography
DNRC Riparian/Wetlands Educational Grant	6-30-00	960.99	Hydrologic Response to the 1988 Fires
DEQ Grant (319 1 st)	9-30-00	40,000.00	Coordinator Position
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant	1-31-01	10,000.00	Watershed Land Use Study
<i>CURRENT GRANTS</i>			
Grant Name	Amount	Spent	Remaining Balance
DEQ Start-Up Grant	49,138.00	27,712.00	21,426.00
DNRC RDGP Grant	299,940.00	189,095.69	110,844.31
DEQ 319 Grant (2 nd)	58,000.00	8,705.16	49,294.84
DNRC HB223 (Riparian Trend Analysis Study)	6,500.00	5,265.61	1,234.39
BLM Funding (Wildlife Study)	10,000	0	10,000.00

John Bailey commented that the Task Force RDGP grant has a September 2002 completion date and asked if DNRC would grant us an extension, if one were needed. The consensus was that extensions are often granted for RDGP grants and that the DNRC has indicated that the Task Force situation should be no exception.

As was requested by the Task Force previously, Liz Galli-Noble presented a Corps budget summary:

**US Army Corps of Engineers
Budget Summary
(as of May 2001)**

Item	Vendor	Amount Spent	Task/Study Funded
Labor & Travel & Contracts	Corps	69,079	Project Coordination
Color Infrared Photos	Private	9,620	NWI Wetland Mapping
Demo Maps	USFWS	3,316	NWI Wetland Mapping
Corridor Inventory	USFWS	17,511	NWI Wetland Mapping
Digital Orthophotos	US Forest Service	32,000	Topographic Mapping Project
Full Study	MSU—USGS Coop	97,536	Fish Populations Study
Fieldwork	USDA—NRCS	25,700	Physical Features Inventory
Fieldwork	USGS—WRD	6,500	Hydraulic Analysis
Fieldwork	USDA—NRCS	5,000	HGM
Fieldwork	USGS—BRD	200,000	Fish Habitat Study
Fieldwork	MSU—USGS Coop	106,000	Wildlife Study (Bird Study)
Floodplain Maps	Corps	150,000**	Topographic Mapping
Fieldwork/Analysis	Private	100,000+**	Socio-Economic Analysis
		\$562,642 + 250,000** = 822,262**	

** = Estimated cost

Budget Explanation:

FY 1999 Congressional Appropriation	\$320,000
FY 1999 Corps Regulatory Branch	\$52,000
FY 2001 Congressional Appropriation	<u>\$650,000</u>
Total	\$1,022,000

May 2001

Total obligations to date	\$572,262 + \$250,000** = \$822,262**
Balance remaining from FY 99	\$0

Balance remaining from FY 01 **\$199,738****

Total project funds remaining **\$199,738****

2. Funding Updates/Discussion

Start-Up Grant Completion

In late May 2001, the Department of Environmental Quality contacted the Task Force and requested that the Start-Up Grant remaining balance of \$21,426 be spent by June 30, 2001. Liz Galli-Noble discussed the issue with John Bailey, the Park Conservation District, and DEQ, and came up with a proposal for compiling with that request (see *Attachment A*), which was presented to the Task Force. A short discussion followed where Task Force members supported the actions outlined in the proposal. John

Bailey and other members thanked Dean Yashan and the DEQ for providing this invaluable funding to the Task Force and for allowing us such flexibility over the last three years.

Bob Wiltshire moved to “spend the remaining funds (\$21,426) of the Start-Up Grant as itemized in *Attachment A*.” Ellen Woodbury seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

319 Grant #4 application and approval

Liz presented a draft 319 Grant application for Task Force review and approval. John Bailey requested that Liz provide the 319 grant application early this year, just in case the Task Force reappointment was not finalized before the late August grant deadline. Liz explained that the budget within the 319 Grant is for approximately eighteen months, providing a buffer into early 2004 to publish and distribute Task Force recommendations and other documents. John Bailey requested that all language specifying this as the “last or final” request for 319 funding be stricken. His reasoning was that the Task Force may not receive full funding in this grant request, and therefore may need to apply for another 319 Grant in the future.

Michelle Goodwine moved to “approve the amended 319 Grant application.” Dave Haug seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Task Force Renewal

Governor’s Executive Order Renewal

John Bailey reported that he recently spoke to Todd O’Hair (Governor Martz’s Natural Resource Advisor) concerning Task Force renewal. Todd felt that the Governor would be signing a renewal executive order soon. In addition, Todd O’Hair mentioned that the governor’s office is strongly encouraging the Task Force to finish the project by the end of 2003 or earlier.

Task Force Member Resignation/Replacement

John Bailey reported that two voting members and one ex-officio member resigned from the Task Force in the past two months. Tom Lane resigned on May 9, 2001 by publishing his letter of resignation in the *Livingston Enterprise*; however, Tom did not submit a letter of resignation to John Bailey nor to Governor Martz. Mike Atwood wrote a letter of resignation to John Bailey dated May 20, 2001, explaining that his job had taken him to California temporarily and he would be unable to continue as a member of the Task Force. Finally, John Logan (USFS, Gardiner Ranger District ex-officio member) has taken a new position in Utah with the Forest Service. Terri Marceron mentioned that it would probably be two to three months before John Logan’s position will be filled, and that individual will then replace John on the Task Force.

John Bailey reported that he and Todd O’Hair also discussed Task Force member replacements. Todd suggested that John relay the names of individuals interested in replacing Tom Lane or Mike Atwood to the governor’s office. John added that the Task Force must be very careful getting involved in what was long ago decided would be the Governor’s decision. Bob Wiltshire agreed that he felt the Task Force should not make any official recommendations to the Governor for replacements, and added that hopefully Governor Martz would replace Tom and Mike with individuals representing the same interest groups (that is, agriculture and the natural resource industry).

V. Outreach and Education Activities Updates

(1) Socio-Economic Assessment Update

Dave Haug, Socio-Economic Subcommittee member, reported that he has represented the subcommittee in the Socio-Economic Assessment contract negotiations between the Corps and BBC. Having signed a Federal Government confidentiality agreement for contracting, Dave was unable to provide a great deal of detail, but added that if negotiations continue to go well, an agreement should be in place within the next two to three weeks, and that Phase I of the study would take seven to eight months to complete.

(2) Workshops/Tours/Conferences:

Research Demonstration Workshop

Liz Galli-Noble gave a summary report on the May 5, 2001 Research Demonstration Workshop (see *Attachment B*). Several key observations were made, including:

- Meeting at different locations along the river was a good idea.
- 30 to 35 members of the public attended the workshop, and an additional 10 people from the Task Force (members and researchers) also attended.
- Task Force members were noticeably missing from the workshop.
- The radio-collared fish portion of the workshop was very interesting. It was recommended that we give project progress reports at future workshops.
- Research studies are presently in their early stages and we should be cautious in releasing raw data too early; unscientific assumptions can be developed from the information.

Liz thanked the Workshop Subcommittee members: Rod Siring, Tom Hallin, and Andy Dana for their invaluable input during the planning stages of the workshop. She also thanked Duncan Patten and the researcher team presenters for the time and effort that they put into educating the community. Finally, the Montana Watercourse and Yellowstone National Park were thanked for their support of the workshop, funding and transportation respectively. Overall, the workshop got high marks, and the public asked that the Task Force continue to do more of them in the future.

Cumulative Impact Analysis Workshop

Liz was invited to attend the *Cumulative Impact Analysis Workshop* in Omaha from May 14 to 16, 2001. The Upper Yellowstone River Cumulative Effects Investigation was one of two focal projects discussed at the workshop, and Liz and Allan Steinle presented a project overview to the Corps and EPA participants. Workshop participants responded positively to the Task Force effort, which is viewed nationally as a pilot project for cumulative effects analysis. Allan Steinle commented that this is a unique opportunity for the Corps Regulatory Branch to work with an entity like the Task Force, which is made up of local citizens, who are driving the effort.

Office of Management & Budget River Tour

John Bailey reported that the Corps hosted an upper Yellowstone River tour for the Office of Management and Budget on June 25, 2001 and invited the Task Force to lead the tour. John Bailey, Duncan Patten, and Allan Steinle, accompanied Gary Waxman (OMB) and five regional and national Corps staff on the tour from Mallards Rest to Mayor's Landing. The tour helped to educate the OMB about the upper Yellowstone, while allowing them to see how and where federal funding is being spent on the project.

National Watershed Forum, Washington D.C.

John Bailey was invited to attend the National Watershed Forum in Washington D.C., representing the Task Force and watershed efforts in Montana. Unable to attend, John encouraged Liz to go instead. A scholarship will pay for most of the event and travel. Liz reported that she leaves tomorrow morning and will attend the Forum from June 27 to July 2, 2001.

VI. Wildlife Literature Review Discussion

Although not formally on the agenda, John Bailey opened up discussion on the Wildlife Literature Review. He first inquired as to the status of the Wildlife Literature Review and how the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) planned to deal with the issue.

The publication: *Toward Assessing the Effects of Bank Stabilization Activities on Wildlife Communities of the*

Upper Yellowstone River, U.S.A. was funded by the US Fish Wildlife Service and conducted by the USGS—Biological Resource Division. It was produced as a literature review—a review of published wildlife research conducted in the upper Yellowstone area. The publication has no direct tie to the Wildlife (Bird) Assessment. Upon receipt of the publication, Liz sent copies to Task Force and TAC members, and approximately five additional individuals.

The document's introduction states that the Task Force and their TAC endorsed the publication, which is incorrect. The Task Force never formally endorsed the publication, nor did the TAC review the final product before publication. Complicating the issue further, even though the Task Force never formally endorsed the publication, the publication and its budget of \$10,000 are mentioned in three Task Force Annual Reports.

Task Force members, Jerry O'Hair and Tom Lane, had issues with the "biased" and leading language used in the document's introduction.

Duncan Patten stated that he personally felt that the science in the publication is incomplete and the listing of "species of concern" is incomplete, leading, and inappropriate. He reiterated that neither the Task Force nor the TAC officially endorsed the publication. In addition, Duncan mentioned that the publication never received peer review. The first wildlife study proposal was submitted to the Task Force by the same authors of the literature review: the USGS—BRD. However, the second and approved wildlife study proposal has no connection or relationship to the literature review document.

The Task Force felt the need to go through the procedural method set up for the TAC in reviewing proposals and reporting back to the Task Force with their recommendations. There was general discussion by the Task Force about how they would deal with these types of issues in the future. It was decided that the Task Force must receive technical guidance from the full TAC before they take action in these matters. In other words, the legitimacy of scientific analysis and technical (scientific) recommendations are the domain of the TAC, the Task Force should be following their scientific lead.

Ellen Woodbury moved to "have the TAC review the Wildlife Literature Review and give their recommendation to the Task Force at our next meeting."
Michelle Goodwine seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously;
however, Jerry O'Hair approved with reluctance.

VII. Modeling

Duncan Patten briefly addressed the subject of modeling and inter-relations amongst all the study components. John Bailey mentioned that we are entering a new phase of the project; a lot of data will begin to be presented to the Task Force and the public. It will be important to stage the studies for data purposes and to foster Task Force and public understanding of the data.

The following suggestions were made for future meetings:

- (a) Address one study component per meeting with little or nothing else on the agenda.
- (b) Data will be presented as facts, not conclusions.
- (c) All preliminary data will first be presented to the Task Force.
- (d) Data will be presented in the following sequence: (1) results, then (2) discussion of results (interpretation), and finally (3) conclusions (tied to goals of the Task Force).

VIII. Schedule Next Task Force Meeting

Liz Galli-Noble requests that Task Force members call her at #222-3701, if they will be unable to attend scheduled meetings.

A tentative Task Force meeting is scheduled for:

Thursday, August 21, 2001 at the Yellowstone Inn.

This meeting will be cancelled if the official Task Force renewal does not meet this timeframe.

IX. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Appendix A. Start Up Grant Completion

The Task Force has recently been told by the DEQ to close out the Start Up Grant by June 30, 2001. The new DEQ administration has decided that the Start Up Grant money (originating from a 1996 DEQ budget) must be closed out by the end of Fiscal Year 2001.

Start Up Grant Background

To remind you of the history of this funding source, here are some facts:

- (1) The Task Force received \$49,138.00 in funding from the DEQ in early October 1998.

- (2) As the title implied, the DEQ viewed this money as assistance to help the Task Force get “started”.
- (3) The original Start Up Grant contract was given for one year, terminating June 1, 1999 (SECTION II of contract). SECTION IV of contract also states that “this agreement may be terminated in whole or in part in writing by DEQ for its convenience....”.
- (4) Two modified agreements were then signed in 1999 and 2000 extending the contract for one additional year each. The second modified agreement terminates on June 30, 2001. The DEQ has chosen not to sign another extension.

Expended Start Up Funds

To date the Task Force has funded the following activities with Start Up Grant funds:

Previous Expenses:

Meeting Room	987.25
Administrative Secretary - Park CD	5,904.00
Tours/Workshops Expenses	191.47
Aerial Photo Acquisition	
Forest Service	7,340.00
Map Inc.	3,257.50
Park CD (Landowner Permission)	636.00
Other Expenses	
Coordinator Position (Advertisement)	381.29
Equipment (Slide Projector/Overhead Projector)	350.00
Senator Baucus meeting (Van Rental)	70.00
Annual Report	3,393.90
Rapid Aerial Assessment video (Council)	1,000.00
Map Inc. (Additional Set of Photos)	1,046.20
GIS/GPS Unit (Slave Unit)	1,500.00
Administration Fee - Park CD	<u>1,654.39</u>
	<u>\$27,712.00</u>

Spending Down the Start Up Grant

To date, \$21,426 still remains in the Start Up Grant fund.

The following is a proposed action for applying the remaining Start Up funds that will most benefit the Task Force in the long term. What is proposed is to apply the remaining Start Up funds to expenses already incurred over the past three months. Specifically, activities such as:

(1) operations (monthly meetings, office expenses, rent), (2) administrative services (PCD secretarial services), and (3) coordinator salary (project management, outreach/education) would be funded.

These particular activities closely parallel activities covered by our DEQ 319 Grants. Applying Start Up funds to these activities will allow an equal amount of funds to then be freed up (or extended) from our 319 Grant #2, thus making “Start Up” types of activities (meeting room, secretarial services, Annual Report) fundable through our already secured 319 funding.

\$6,500 will also fund 20 additional cross sectional surveys, as was approved by the Task Force a month or two ago.

Proposed Expenses:

Meeting Room Rent (Yellowstone Inn)	160.89
Administrative Secretary Time	1,008.00
Other Expenses	
USGS (Additional Cross Sections)	6,500.00
Coordination Salary	8,289.75
Operating Expenses	1,713.92
Office Rent	2,300.00

Administration Fee - Park CD	<u>1,453.44</u>
Total	<u>\$21,426.00</u>

The DEQ considers this to be a good approach for spending the remaining Start Up Grant funds, and they are willing to work with the Task Force in applying additional services—such as meeting room, secretarial services, Annual Report—to our 319 Grant spending in the future.

Appendix B. Governor’s Upper Yellowstone River Task Force, Demonstration Workshop Summary

Date: Saturday, May 5, 2001

Time: 9:00 am to 3:30 pm

Number of people in attendance: 40 officially signed in; approximately 10 additional participants; varied throughout the day.

Budget: Task Force	\$152
Montana Watercourse	\$215
Yellowstone National Park	Bus/driver/gas

Special thanks: Workshop Subcommittee
Rod Siring, Tom Hallin, Andy Dana

Agenda:

MAYOR'S LANDING

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

9:00 – 9:15 Introductions (John Bailey, Task Force Chair)
9:15 – 9:30 Workshop Overview (Dr. Duncan Patten, TAC Chair)

DEMONSTRATION #1

9:30 – 10:30 Fish Populations & Habitat Studies (Dr. Al Zale & Doug Rider, MSU)
10:30 – 10:45 Trout Radio-tagging Project (Jim DeRito, MSU)
10:45 – 11:00 Questions/Discussion
11:00 – 11:30 Travel to Mallard's Rest

MALLARD'S REST

DEMONSTRATION #2

11:30 – 12:00 Riparian Vegetation Study (Dr. Mike Merigliano, U of M)
12:00 – 12:30 PICNIC LUNCH

DEMONSTATION #3

12:30 – 1:00 Wildlife Study (Dr. Andy Hansen or Dr. Jay Rotella, MSU)
1:00 – 1:30 Travel from Mallard's Rest to Pine Creek Bridge

PINE CREEK BRIDGE

DEMONSTRATION #4

1:30 – 2:00 Geomorphology Study (Chuck Dalby, DNRC)

DEMONSTRATION #5

2:00 – 2:30 Hydrology / Hydraulics Study (Chuck Dalby, DNRC)

CONCLUSION & WRAP UP

2:30 – 3:00 Closing Statements (Dr. Duncan Patten)
3:00 – 3:30 Travel from Pine Creek Bridge to Mayor's Landing

Evaluation Summary
Upper Yellowstone River Research Demonstration Workshop
May 5, 2001

The following is a summary of workshop evaluations received by the Task Force:

Evaluate:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Relevance of topics discussed	XXXXX			
Quality of speakers	XXX	X		
Organization of workshop	XXXX	X		
Overall assessment of workshop	XX	XXX		

(1) **What was your favorite aspect of the workshop? Why?**
Speakers on the stream bank.

Forest ecology demonstration. The discussion that put present situation in historical context was essential to understanding river dynamics and the nature of change in a river system.

Listening to the scientists discuss their work.

I enjoyed it all, and thought that riparian and fisheries segments were particularly good.

Riding the bus enabled us to discuss with specialists topics probably not of general interest.

(2) Which aspect of the workshop was most useful/educational to you?

Hydrology and preliminary results were useful for other places I work (i.e. the middle and lower Yellowstone).

Seeing that the tree core project (Riparian Trend Analysis) may in fact not be a total waste of taxpayer money.

(3) Which aspect of the workshop was the least helpful/informative to you? Why?

Migratory songbird demonstration. Very unfortunate to stick doctoral candidate, who has just arrived in Montana in that situation. Rotella or Hansen should have delivered. He was not able to discuss details and rationale of song bird/habitat study.

Dragged on at the end of the day.

They were all informative.

Certain people seemed to be running their own programs at each stop by continually holding conflicting lectures with others. With wind and river noise it was hard enough to concentrate on speakers and on questions from attendees without having additional conversations going on.

(4) What suggestions do you have for future Task Force workshops? Are there any specific topics that you would like us to address?

Have all attendees introduce themselves and their interests. Improves networking.

Give a better overview of how all disciplines overlap and why communication between study groups is essential.

I would like to know the guests involvement, be it landowner, county administrator, citizen, etc.....

Riparian zone management needs to be discussed at some timely future point.

Give full support to speakers.

(5) Are you interested in attending our next Research Demonstration Workshop this spring?

Yes. (6)

(6) Other comments:

Nice job. Keep up the good work.

The downside was that there were so few Task Force members present. They, above all, need to be educated on what the project is doing, and when someone goes to this level of effort to provide that education there had better be excellent reasons (sick, family members sick, essential work demands, etc.) for not attending!!!!

For the next workshop, provide Task Force members with written invitations and the proviso that if they can't attend to respond in writing, why.

Lunch was good and most personnel were open and cooperative.